

## Hopes to Solve Riddle of Youth By Dinner Here to All Over 90

Ezra Meeker, Tra'l Blazer  
and Santa's Double, In-  
vites Nonagenarians to  
Bring Statements on Var-  
quishing Age; Bars Let  
Down to Chauncey Depew

Most men don't acquire real common sense until they're sixty or seventy. Then, just as they start going good, along comes Old G. Reaper, there's a new tombstone in the cemetery, and Pate, inscribing an additional name in the Ledger of Closed Accounts, emits another shrill, mocking laugh.

All of which, according to Ezra Meeker, should and can be changed. His philosophy is that the first hundred years, though they may be the hardest, merely terminate the period of adolescence in the Scheme-of-Things-as-They-Should-Be, and that if mankind will but determine it to the span of human life can be raised to such a point that Methuselah would appear as a curling infant in swaddling clothes. As a starter, says Ezra, the members of the next few generations should live to be not a day less than 200.

For that reason, Ezra, who went over the Oregon Trail in an ox-wagon in 1842, founded Pullman, Wash., wrote looks in longhand and looks and acts enough like Santa Claus to be his twin brother, is going to celebrate his ninety-second birthday next Friday by giving the world the Christmas present of telling it how to live longer.

**Offers Novel Invitation**  
His medium will be the holding of one of the most unusual dinners ever held in this city. Through the columns of the newspapers, he hereby invites all New Yorkers who have attained the age of ninety or more to go on Friday evening to Child's restaurant in the old Holland House, at Thirtieth Street and Fifth Avenue, and there, after he has thoroughly dined them, to tell just how they got that way. He's counting on at least 100.

All the guests, still sticking to the terms of the invitation, "are requested to bring photographs of themselves and a hundred-word statement, showing how they have lived to reach their advanced age."

Then, after the last guest has concluded the reading aloud of his biography, the statements will be collected and given the press, so the world may know whether it is really true that the good die young, the relation of liquor and love to longevity, and numerous other points of value for those who desire to keep out of cemeteries as long as possible.

**Hint to Spirit of Occasion**  
Something of the spirit in which the dinner is to be held is contained in the text of the invitation, which reads, in part:

"I will be ninety-two on December 29. I want to meet the elderly gentlemen of this city on that day. I and my friends extend a cordial invitation to all persons in New York on that

date over ninety years to a dinner at 8 o'clock, the menu of which has been jocularly set out to consist of 'possum, roast potatoes, corn pone, hominy, butter beans, wholewheat bread, milk and saffron tea or coffee, as preferred.

"Tickets will be issued to all persons of this class who apply for them up to and including December 28. Each guest may bring a friend, who can purchase a ticket for the feast, up to the capacity of the tables.

"Guests are requested to bring photographs of themselves, which can be returned after being used, and a hundred-word statement showing how they have lived to reach their advanced age. Short addresses will be in order, old time songs and music appreciated; perhaps an old time spelling school can be staged.

"The written statements from the old-timers will furnish an interesting and valuable record, and it is requested that each bring two copies, one for the press and one for me."

The 'possum part of the dinner, it was disclosed, is to be provided by former Governor Chase Osborne, of Michigan, himself a nonagenarian, who shot seven of them on a Louisiana hunting trip and has sent them to New York. He has been invited to attend, as has Chauncey Depew, who, while a mere youth of eighty-eight, is so good a teller of experiences that Ezra let down the age bars a trifle in his case.

Mr. Meeker is in New York primarily to aid the cause of the Oregon Trail, a bill for which will come up in a Senate committee soon. He declined yesterday to reveal his own story of how he "grew to be ninety," saying he intended to "save it for Friday."

Has all of these problems, it has, on the contrary, aggravated them and ignored the demands of the American people as expressed at the polls and elsewhere?

"You state that the Federal Reserve System and the Federal Land Banks should have their powers enlarged to provide increased farm credits. Are you not aware of the fact that the so-called Federal Reserve System is in effect not a Federal system at all, but a system of private banks designated as Federal depositories controlled by precisely the same Wall Street clique which has for years exploited the country for its own personal benefit?"

"As you say, the Railroad Labor Board has not functioned very satisfactorily. But do you really believe that this is due to the fact that one-third of its members represent the railroads and one-third the railroad workers?"

"Is it not fairer to say that the remaining one-third which represent the public do not properly represent the public sentiment? Is it not at least in part due to the fact that the Railroad Labor Board have allowed the railroad executives to flagrantly disregard their mandates while they have strenuously demanded that the railroad brotherhoods should obey them?"

**Two Killed in Pitched Battle Over Card Game**

**Hackensack Men Are Stabbed, Three Brothers Held as Material Witnesses**

Carmelo Lofaro, of Fort Lee, went into the police station of that town yesterday and told the police he had reason to believe there had been a shooting in the town. The police investigated and found the dead bodies of James Lofaro, thirty-three years old, and Joseph Tromalli, twenty-eight, who lived in an Italian boarding house on Hudson Street. Lofaro's body was found in the street with several stab wounds near the heart. The body of Tromalli, who also had been stabbed, was found in the back yard of Joseph Duna, on Hudson Street, about a block from where the men lived.

Three brothers of Lofaro—Anthony, nineteen years old; Paul, thirty-five, and Joseph, twenty-five—were arrested and committed to Hackensack jail as material witnesses.

They said they believed the killings to have been the result of a quarrel over a card game, but beyond that professed entire ignorance of the affair. The police are now looking for a fourth brother, Carmelo Lofaro. The Carmelo Lofaro who reported the killings to the police is a cousin. All the men lived at 2137 Hudson Street. Residents in the neighborhood said they had heard several shots during the night, and the police believe that several men were involved in a pitched battle with knives and revolvers.

**Hits Federal Reserve System**  
"Is it not more correct to say that, through the utter failure of your Administration to uphold the law and to recognize the humanity which under-

## 4 Priests, 3 Women Near Death As Parish Residence Is Fired

WOBURN, Mass., Dec. 24.—The lives of four priests, a housekeeper and two maids of the parish residence of St. Charles's Roman Catholic Church here were endangered early to-day by fire believed to have been of incendiary origin.

The flames were discovered by Thomas Trainor, janitor of the church, who was on his way to work at day-break. Smoke and flames were bursting from the windows of the lower floor before aid arrived in answer to Trainor's alarm, and it was found that the occupants were trapped on the upper floors by fire and smoke.

The Rev. John P. Gorham, pastor of the church, and the Revs. William Kenville, Walter A. Fegan and Patrick Quill were aroused and assisted down ladders to safety while other firemen carried Miss Catherine Hunt, the resi-

dence housekeeper, and two maids to safety. The offices and living quarters were swept before the flames were extinguished.

State police and city officers asserted that they believed the fire to have been of incendiary origin. They found a window into the basement of the residence broken.

A week ago to-day Father Quill discovered a fire in the church just across the street from the residence, but it was extinguished before serious damage was done. The cause of this blaze was unknown.

Early last Thanksgiving Day the home here of Judge John J. McGuire, of the Woburn District Court, was damaged by fire and he and his family were forced to flee through the snow to safety. Police expressed the belief that this fire, too, was of incendiary origin.

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